

From: M A Lytle
To: Microsoft ATR
Date: 1/23/02 9:56am
Subject: Microsoft settlement

To whom it may concern,

As a Information Technology worker with 12 years in the business, I am writing to strongly object to the current proposed Microsoft settlement. In every way possible, this document is crafted to reward Microsoft for unethical behavior and give them the green light to continue business as usual. This settlement is not in the public interest, period.

In how many ways is this settlement flawed? In as many ways as possible, and that is no exaggeration. I have watched the toxic effects of the lack of competition in my own company, where prices for Microsoft's software have risen continuously while computer hardware prices have plummeted in the same time period. I have watched company executives bow down before the monopolistic might of Microsoft to install expensive upgrades to the whole computer complement of the company where I work, only to watch the frustration of new users who have regarded the changes as unnecessary and confusing, and the costs were often absorbed by arguing that we have to "keep up" as though we were in some kind of a race. The combined capital expenditure of all of the major corporations over the last 10 years has amounted to a hidden tax, that has undoubtedly shown up in higher prices for everything we buy, as individuals or companies. And remember that all major software categories were already present since the early to mid 1990's so no new productivity has been achieved since then, only spiraling(upward) software fees. This has happened because no new software firms, with new ideas, can appear and survive in the current business environment, with the present business and legal tactics of Microsoft unabated.

These are just the effects, the things I have seen, in the real world, far removed from the world of the media and the courts, as this trial has laboriously traveled through the legal system, to be apparently dead-ended as irrelevant, now that the national mood is that the powerful are exempt from law or standards of conduct. As I write this you can see I don't believe this, no intelligent person today lacks cynicism about the justice system, but no intelligent person, can afford to give up, either. If we stop caring, we are truly lost.

In summary, I implore you as a citizen to reject this settlement as ineffective, ingenuous, and destructive of the values of competition and openness that once made us great, as a nation. Please restore us to greatness, greatness as defined by fairness for all, not just for the powerful.

Sincerely yours,

Mark A. Lytle
Network Analyst
Houston, Texas